

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

How Many Ways Can You Say Neutrality?

A Prelude to World War II

- Standard: II. Time, Continuity, and Change
V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
VI. Power, Authority, and Governance
IX. Global Connections
X. Civic Ideals and Practices
- Grade Level: 9–12
- Objectives: The student will:
- Examine a variety of documents about neutrality
 - Compare and contrast views expressed about neutrality
 - Assess the diplomatic implications of foreign actions in China

Time: 1 class period (2 class periods if homework is assigned)

Materials: Documents: **1935** *The United States and the World Community*
1935 *American Influence and the Prevention of War*
1936 *The Neutrality Act*
1937 *Pursuing a Policy of Peace*
1939 *Charles Lindbergh on Neutrality and War*
1939 *Is Neutrality Possible for America?*

Resources: Reading: *Biography of Frank B. Kellogg*
http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1929/kellogg-bio.html

Reading: *Biography of William Phillips*
<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,885990,00.html>

Reading: *Biography of Franklin Delano Roosevelt*
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents/franklinroosevelt>

Reading: *Biography of Charles Lindbergh*
<http://www.lindberghfoundation.org/docs/index.php/lindbergh-history/charles-lindbergh>

Reading: *Biography of Gerald P. Nye*
<http://www.answers.com/topic/gerald-nye>

Materials: Newsprint
Markers (including black and red)
Tape

Procedures:

Pre-Activity

- 1.** All students should receive the neutrality documents based on the dates of documents. Randomly, but evenly, distribute the documents to four groups of students:
 - **1935:** The United States and the World Community
American Influence and the Prevention of War
 - **1936:** The Neutrality Act
Pursuing a Policy of Peace
 - **1939:** Charles Lindbergh on Neutrality and War
 - **1939:** Is Neutrality Possible for America?
- 2.** Provide copies of or links to the authors' biographies to the groups. (Optional, at teacher's discretion.)
- 3.** Students should read the assigned articles and answer the following questions. *Note:* Students who receive more than one document, which are short, should answer the questions for EACH document.
 - a. Determine the author's viewpoint of "neutrality."
 - b. How would you define "neutrality" using the author's words?
 - c. What is significant about the year of the document(s)? What is the historical context of the year? (Check textbook for information.)
 - d. Highlight or underline significant statements regarding neutrality and the future of the United States.

Activity:

- 1.** Arrange the desks in groups of four.
- 2.** Place signs on desks: 1935, 1936, 1939—Lindbergh, and 1939—Nye.
- 3.** Have a sheet of newsprint and markers on desks for each group.
- 4.** Students should go to their groups as they enter the room.
- 5.** Have students collaborate to record on newsprint the following information:
 - a. Name of author of document.
 - b. Description of "neutrality" based on the author's words.
 - c. Use bullet points to list significant statements regarding neutrality and the future of the United States.
 - d. On a scale of 1–5, rate the viability of your author's rationale for neutrality. Be prepared to discuss this rating.

- 6.** Groups should place their completed newsprint assessments in the front of the room, taping them to available surfaces.
- 7.** Each group should present its interpretations of the neutrality document(s). (Note: If students read the biographies, they should BRIEFLY identify their author and his background.)
- 8.** Discussion: Compare and contrast the information gathered by students.
- 9.** Have all students walk by the posters. (Black and red markers can be passed from student to student.)
 - a.** Use a black marker and place a check by the BEST description of neutrality.
 - b.** Use a red marker and place a check by the author's name that rates the HIGHEST in his rationale for neutrality.
- 10.** Review the results and discuss the reasons for selections.
- 11.** Wrap up activity with the question, "How many ways can you say neutrality?" ■